		(iv) AWIC Community & Social Services 3030 Don Mills Road, Peanut Plaza, North York, ON M2J 3C1
8.	High Commission of India, London, UK	None empanelled so far
9.	Indian Embassy, Abu Dhabi	None empanelled so far
10.	Indian Embassy, Bahrain	Migrant Workers Protection Society (MWPS) (being considered for empanelment)
11.	Indian Embassy, Kuwait	None empanelled so far
12.	High Commission of India, New Zealand	Shakti Community Council INC, Auckland

Scheme for Indians abroad

1484. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRASEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry had readied a scheme to respond to distress calls from Indians working abroad;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) in what manner people would get benefited from such schemes especially who have gone abroad from the Telangana Regions?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has set up an Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) for rendering assistance to Indian workers abroad and those who are desirous of going abroad for employment. The objectives of the Centre are:

- Information dissemination on matters relating to emigration.
- Registering, responding to and monitoring complaints received from emigrant workers.
- Grievance redressal and follow up with stakeholders.

(c) The OWRC functions with a toll free number 1800 11 3090 accessible from anywhere in India for rendering help to the emigrant workers. At present, the Helpline is functioning in seven languages, *viz* Hindi, English, Tamil, Malayalam, Punjabi, Kannada and Telugu from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm, seven days a week. The Helpline can be accessed by all needy persons.

Second ARC recommendation for more rights to Panchayats

†1485. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report of the second

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) submitted to it wherein recommendation has been made to give more rights to the Panchayats;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some of the rights to be given has also been suggested by the above mentioned Commission; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action that has so far been taken by Government to implement this report?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (b) Yes, Sir. The sixth Report of Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) on Local Governance covers the following key areas of reforms in Local Governance:—

- Improving delivery mechanism of public utilities and civic services with greater citizens' and stakeholders' involvement in such processes *viz.* utilities like water. power, health and sanitation, education, etc.
- Empowerment of local self-Government institutions for encouraging participative governance and networking.
- To encourage capacity building training interventions for better performance of local bodies.

ARC has made 256 recommendations in all under 67 headings. 78 recommendations under 15 headings are common both to rural & urban governance. The next 56 recommendations under 18 headings relate to rural governance specifically and the remaining 122 recommendations under 34 headings relate exclusively to urban governance. These recommendations mainly covers existing constitutional scheme, elections, functions of local governments, framework law for local bodies, devolution of funds, capacity buildings for self governance, decentralised planning, accountability and transparency, accounting and audit, and technology and local governance. Various dimensions of Local Governance like institutional reforms, functional devolution, Panchayat finance, rural development, role of Panchayats in delivery of services and local government in the Fifth and Sixth Schedule Areas have been addressed in the Report.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has given its comments and views on the recommendations of the ARC on common issues as well as on specific issues related to rural governance. The Core Group on Administrative Reforms (CGAR) considered the comments given by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on the common issues as well as the specific issues concerned with rural governance. CGAR also decided that Ministry of Panchayati Raj would call a meeting of all State Governments to discuss implementation of recommendations made by ARC in this Report. Accordingly, a meeting was convened on 28th February, 2008 by this Ministry with the Secretaries, Panchayati Raj Departments of State Governments and Union Territories Administrations. State Governments and UT Administrations have been requested to send their comments on various recommendations concering rural governace contained in the Sixth Report of the Second A.R.C. after due consideration. This Ministry is also in the process of consultation with other concerned Ministries/Departments of the Union Government.